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# REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE SITUATION IN TAJIKISTAN

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 968 (1994) of 16 December 1994. It provides an account of the situation in Tajikistan and the activities of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) since my last report of 4 February 1995 (S/1995/105).

## II. NEGOTIATING PROCESS

2. Since the third round of inter-Tajik talks held in Islamabad at the end of October 1994, the negotiating process has faced a stalemate. In order to revitalize the negotiations, during the temporary absence of my Special Envoy for Tajikistan, Mr. Ramiro Piriz-Ballon, I asked Under-Secretary-General Aldo Ajello to undertake consultations with the Russian Federation, the Government of Tajikistan and the Tajik opposition. Mr. Ajello visited Moscow from 24 to 27 February, Dushanbe on 28 February and 1 March and Islamabad from 2 to 4 March. As a result of those consultations, the cease-fire agreement was extended until 26 April 1995. Progress was made in addressing some of the problems that the opposition presented as preconditions for holding the next round of inter-Tajik talks in Moscow. Most notably, the Russian Foreign Ministry agreed to issue a statement recognizing the validity of the agreement on the temporary cease-fire and cessation of other hostile acts of 17 September 1994 (the "Tehran agreement") (S/1994/1102, annex I) for the Russian border guards and servicemen of the Collective Peace-keeping Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in Tajikistan. However, such issues as the agenda, time and venue for the fourth round of negotiations remained unresolved and the opposition continued to insist on various conditions, particularly the withdrawal of 350 Tajik government soldiers deployed in Gorno-Badakshan in violation of the Tehran agreement.

3. In early April 1995, my Special Envoy undertook new consultations with the Tajik parties and Governments in the region to clear the way for the next round of negotiations. As a result of his discussions in Moscow and Dushanbe, an

understanding was reached that 350 Tajik government soldiers deployed in Gorno-Badakshan would withdraw by 10 April 1995. The main obstacle to the early resumption of negotiations would thus have been removed. However, after the attack by the opposition on a convoy of the Russian border forces on 7 April 1995, the Tajik Government withdrew from this understanding.

4. In an effort to stop the ensuing escalation of hostilities and to bring about the fourth round of inter-Tajik talks, my Special Envoy arranged for a meeting with the Chairman of the Islamic Revival Movement of Tajikistan, Mr. Abdullo Nuri, to be held on 10 April at the latter's headquarters in Talokan in northern Afghanistan. However, a land-mine exploded under a truck of the Russian border forces shortly before Mr. Piriz-Ballon's convoy was to pass en route to boarding a ferry in Nizhniy Pyanj. During the following three hours, the Russian border forces defused two other land-mines in the area but declared themselves unable to ensure the safety of the convoy and refused it permission to continue its journey.

5. My Special Envoy was thus unable to proceed to Talokan but he spoke to Mr. Nuri by short-wave radio from Dushanbe. They eventually agreed that high-level consultations of the two Tajik parties would be held in Moscow as soon as possible and without preconditions, to reach agreement on the agenda, time and venue for the fourth round of inter-Tajik talks, extend the Tehran agreement and prevent further escalation of fighting.

6. Those consultations were held in Moscow under the auspices of the United Nations from 19 to 26 April 1995, with the participation, as observers, of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan. The delegation of the Government of Tajikistan was headed by the First Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Mahmadsaid Ubaidulaev, and the delegation of the Tajik opposition by the First Deputy Chairman of the Islamic Revival Movement of Tajikistan, Mr. Akbar Turajonzodah. The consultations ended with a joint statement, which has been circulated under cover of a letter from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation (S/1995/337).

7. The main results of the consultations in Moscow can be summarized as follows:

(a) The two sides reconfirmed their commitment to settling the conflict and achieving national reconciliation in the country through exclusively peaceful political means on the basis of mutual concessions and compromise;

(b) In order to enhance the effectiveness of the Tehran agreement, the two sides agreed to include a number of additions to its text. The most important stipulates that all the provisions of the Tehran agreement would be binding for the opposition groups in the territory of Afghanistan, with the understanding that the Joint Commission and United Nations military observers would carry out monitoring functions in the territory of that country when they received the official agreement of the Afghan authorities. The revised text of the agreement is annexed to the present report;

(c) In the context of strengthening the cease-fire, the two delegations welcomed the statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, which provides that the Russian border guards and Russian servicemen in Tajikistan with the Collective Peace-keeping Forces of CIS, respecting and recognizing the agreements of the Tajik parties, will not violate them in carrying out their functions;

(d) The validity of the Tehran agreement of 17 September 1994 was extended by one month until 26 May 1995. My Special Envoy had pressed for an extension by six months but the opposition did not accept that so long as the Government refused to withdraw its 350 soldiers from Gorno-Badakshan. After lengthy discussions, the parties agreed to consider the questions related to redeployment and relocation of forces before the fourth round of inter-Tajik talks;

(e) President Rakhmonov and the leader of the Tajik opposition, Mr. Nuri, agreed to meet before the fourth round of inter-Tajik talks. President Rabbani of Afghanistan has offered Kabul as the venue for this meeting;

(f) Agreement was reached on measures to strengthen the role of the Joint Commission. The two parties decided to expand the Commission's membership to 14 (7 each). They confirmed their obligation to provide material and technical assistance to the Commission, as set forth in the protocol to the Tehran agreement. At the same time, the two parties appealed to the States Members of the United Nations to provide financial support to the Joint Commission through the Trust Fund established by the United Nations. The parties noted the importance of regular access by the Commission members to the mass media (at least twice a month) and the possibility for citizens to contact Commission members anonymously;

(g) Finally, the two parties agreed to hold the fourth round of inter-Tajik talks in Almaty beginning on 22 May 1995 and to include on the agenda of the talks the fundamental institutional issues and consolidation of the statehood of Tajikistan, as set forth during the first round of inter-Tajik talks held in Moscow in April 1994.

## III. MAINTENANCE OF THE CEASE-FIRE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION OF OBSERVERS IN TAJIKISTAN

8. The situation in Tajikistan remained relatively quiet until the first week of April 1995. However, the period was marked by increasing tension arising from attempts at infiltration by opposition fighters from Afghanistan and the continued presence of Tajik government troops in Gorno-Badakshan, where they had been deployed in early January. The deployment of those troops and infiltration across the border are prohibited by the Tehran agreement

9. During this period, numerous smaller incidents were reported to UNMOT, which carried out 32 investigations, either independently or together with the Joint Commission. Many of the incidents were such that it could not be determined whether they were hostilities between the Government and the opposition or actions in a different context. However, UNMOT confirmed three

instances of violations of the Tehran agreement: on 23 March, Tajik government troops were deployed to Khihchon and Dashti-sher in Garm district; on 29 March, a company of the Tajik Armed Forces participated in a training exercise of the CIS Collective Peace-keeping Forces; and on 30 March, fighting occurred between opposition fighters and Government forces in the Yasmand canyon, in Garm district. UNMOT reported these violations to the Joint Commission and raised them with the party concerned, including the Russian authorities in the case of the training exercise.

10. Beginning on 7 April 1995, the situation deteriorated and the cease-fire was repeatedly broken in a series of violent incidents, involving attacks by Tajik opposition fighters against the Russian border forces and retaliation, at times harsh and indiscriminate, by those forces against targets on Afghan territory:

(a) On 7 April a convoy of 180 members of the Kazakh contingent of the Russian border forces was ambushed by opposition fighters, east of Kalaikhumb in Gorno-Badakshan. Twenty soldiers were reported killed and 26 injured;

(b) On 8 and 9 April, opposition fighters attacked the Russian border forces in Dashti-Yazgulem in Gorno-Badakshan;

(c) On 8 April, the Russian border forces in Pyanj reported an infiltration attempt by 30 members of the opposition, to which they reacted with rocket fire;

(d) On 9 and 10 April, fighting took place between the Russian border forces and the opposition in Kalot in Gorno-Badakshan;

(e) On 10 April, opposition fighters attacked the Russian border forces barracks at Vanj, east of Kalaikhumb. Intermittent fighting continued until 16 April;

(f) On 13 April, Russian aircraft bombed Talokan in northern Afghanistan, causing a large number of civilian casualties and heavy damage in the city. On 18 April, members of the Joint Commission and UNMOT visited Talokan to interview witnesses and survey the damage caused by the bombing;

(g) On 13 April, opposition fighters attacked a convoy of the Russian border forces about 15 kilometres north of Khorog.

Those hostilities caused numerous casualties on both sides. There were also reports of other incidents but they could not be corroborated.

11. On 10 April, the opposition released in Khorog 36 wounded members of the Russian border forces whom they had taken prisoner.

12. The situation has been quieter since the third week of April. The Russian border forces report almost daily infiltration attempts in the Pyanj area by small groups of two or three at a time. The border forces counter these attempts by frequent shelling across the river.

## Joint Commission

13. In March, the opposition announced that it would withdraw from the Commission if the Government did not remove by 31 March the 350 soldiers it had deployed to Gorno-Badakshan and proceeded with the planned participation of government troops in the training exercises of the CIS Collective Peace-keeping Forces on 29 March. Although the decision to withdraw from the Commission was suspended, following the announcement of my Special Envoy's visit to the area, three of the four representatives of the opposition on the Joint Commission left Dushanbe in late March. Except for the investigation in Talokan on 18 April, the Commission has since been inactive.

14. In accordance with the protocol to the Tehran agreement, the Tajik Government is responsible for providing accommodation and logistic support for the Joint Commission on Tajik territory and the opposition on Afghan territory. Such support has been inadequate and this has remained a serious impediment to the effective functioning of the Commission. The CIS Collective Peace-keeping Forces have not provided logistic support, as had been hoped. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has contributed $54,000 to the Trust Fund established to support the Joint Commission, while the United States of America has announced its readiness to contribute $28,000. The modalities of that contribution are currently being worked out.

15. As reported earlier, the parties have decided to strengthen the Joint Commission and have confirmed their obligation to provide it with material support.

## Liaison

16. UNMOT has maintained close liaison with the parties as well as with the CIS forces and the Russian border forces on matters relating to the maintenance of the cease-fire. In late March, UNMOT established a radio link with the opposition's headquarters in Talokan in northern Afghanistan. This link has greatly facilitated communications with the opposition and was instrumental in arranging the high-level consultations in Moscow at the end of April. UNMOT also provided political liaison and coordination for humanitarian assistance to Tajikistan. The economic situation continued to be very difficult, especially in the areas of Pyanj, Garm and Gorno-Badakshan.

## Organizational aspects

17. As of 1 May 1995, UNMOT personnel numbered 69 over all, including 36 military observers from Austria (5), Bangladesh (7), Bulgaria (4), Denmark (4), Hungary (1), Jordan (5), Poland (1), Switzerland (1), Ukraine (3) and Uruguay (5), and 33 civilian staff. Mr. Darko Silovic succeeded Mr. Liviu Bota as Head of Mission in mid-March. Brigadier-General Hasan Abaza of Jordan continued as Chief Military Observer. In addition to its headquarters in Dushanbe, UNMOT maintained field stations in Garm, Kalaikhumb, Khorog, Kurgan-Tube, Moskovskiy and Pyanj (see map).

## IV. OBSERVATIONS

18. During the past three months, a number of factors combined to create serious difficulties for the political process that the United Nations is trying to promote in Tajikistan. These factors include the Government's position regarding the deployment of its troops to Gorno-Badakshan, the manner in which it carried through the elections on 26 February, the refusal of the opposition to participate in elections even if they were postponed, its attempt to introduce preconditions to the holding of the fourth round of negotiations, its de facto withdrawal from the Joint Commission and, finally, the escalation of hostilities in April.

19. The consultations in Moscow at the end of April should be seen against that background. The extension and strengthening of the cease-fire, the important statement by the Russian authorities recognizing the validity of the Tehran agreement for the Russian forces in Tajikistan and the agreement on the fourth round of negotiations are steps in the right direction and contribute to dispelling the doubts that have arisen about the readiness of the parties to the conflict to settle their differences by peaceful political means. This result provides grounds for continuing United Nations efforts and maintaining UNMOT. I shall inform the Security Council on the results of the fourth round of inter-Tajik talks.

20. However, progress has yet to be achieved on the substantive issues that divide the parties. In Moscow, my Special Envoy conveyed in the clearest possible terms the view of the United Nations that the primary responsibility for resolving their differences rests with the Tajik parties themselves and that the continued involvement and presence of the United Nations in Tajikistan depends on the manner in which the parties discharge that responsibility. Our expectations in this regard now focus on the forthcoming fourth round of negotiations and the planned meeting between President Rakhmonov and Mr. Nuri.

21. In the meantime, the situation in Tajikistan remains tense, particularly on the border with Afghanistan. I appeal to the Tajik parties to comply strictly with the obligations they have assumed to implement fully the Tehran agreement and to refrain from any steps that could aggravate the existing situation or complicate the peace process at this critical juncture. In this connection, I wish to underline the need to strengthen the Joint Commission, as decided in Moscow, and to enable it to assume the central role envisaged for it in the Tehran agreement. I call on the authorities and forces operating in the region to cooperate fully with the Joint Commission and UNMOT in the discharge of their important responsibilities.

Annex

Agreement on a Temporary Cease-fire and the Cessation of other Hostile Acts on the Tajik-Afghan Border and within the Country for the Duration of the Talks

Revised text

The delegations of the leaders of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Tajik opposition (hereinafter referred to as "the Parties"), in the course of the consultations on national reconciliation held in Tehran from 12 to 17 September 1994 under United Nations auspices, as a major step towards a global political settlement of the conflict, national reconciliation and the solution of the problem of refugees, the constitutional system and the consolidation of the statehood of the independent and sovereign Republic of Tajikistan, have agreed:

1. To halt, on a temporary basis, hostilities on the Tajik-Afghan border and within the country.

2. The Parties have agreed that the concept of "cessation of hostilities" shall include the following:

(a) The cessation by the Parties of all military activities, including all violations of the Tajik-Afghan border, offensive operations within the country, the shelling of adjacent territories, the conduct of all forms of military training, the redeployment of regular and irregular military formations in Tajikistan and in the territory of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, which might result in the breakdown of this Agreement. The Joint Commission and the United Nations military observers will carry out monitoring functions in the territory of the Islamic State of Afghanistan when they have received the official agreement of the Afghan authorities;

Note: The Collective Peace-keeping forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Russian troops in Tajikistan shall carry out their duties in keeping with the principle of neutrality, which is part of their mandate, and shall cooperate with United Nations military observers.

(b) The cessation by the Parties of acts of terrorism and sabotage on the Tajik-Afghan border, within the Republic and in other countries;

(c) The prevention by the Parties of murders, the taking of hostages, unlawful arrest and detention, searches for political reasons, and acts of pillage against the civilian population and servicemen in the Republic and other countries;

(d) The prevention of actions to disable or blockage national economic, military and other installations, populated areas and all means of communication;

(e) The cessation of the use of all forms of communication and mass media, printed materials and audio and video cassettes to undermine the process of national reconciliation;

(f) The Parties shall refrain from using religion and the religious feelings of believers, as well as any ideology, for hostile purposes.

3. The Parties have agreed to a temporary cease-fire and the cessation of other hostile acts on the Tajik-Afghan border and within the country until the referendum on the draft of the new constitution and the election of the president of the Republic of Tajikistan, on the understanding that this is only a first step towards the achievement of national harmony and the settlement of all issues included in the agenda of the talks.

4. With a view to building confidence, the Parties have agreed that, within one month following the signing of this Agreement:

(a) The authorities of the Republic of Tajikistan shall release those who have been arrested and sentenced, in conformity with the list annexed hereto;

(b) The Tajik opposition shall release the prisoners of war in conformity with the list annexed hereto.

5. With a view to ensuring the effective implementation of this Agreement, the Parties have agreed to establish a Joint Commission consisting of representatives of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Tajik opposition. The Parties request the Security Council of the United Nations to assist the work of the Commission by providing political mediation services and dispatching United Nations military observers to the areas of conflict.

6. This Agreement was signed at Tehran on 17 September 1994 and shall enter into force as soon as United Nations observers are deployed in Tajikistan.

Head of the delegation
of the Republic of Tajikistan:

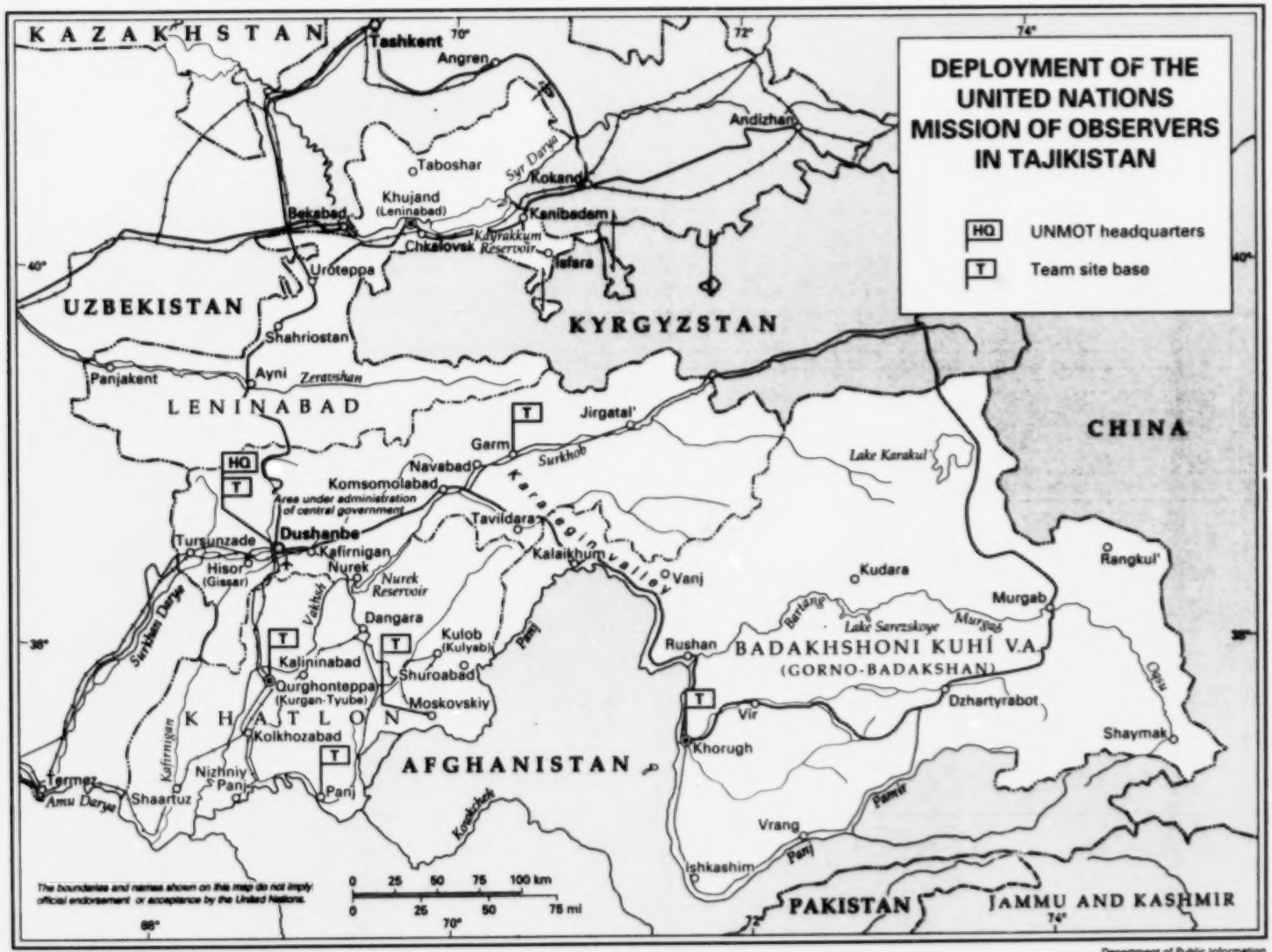
A. DOSTIEV

Head of the delegation
of the Tajik opposition:

A. TURAJONZODA

Special Envoy of the Secretary-General
of the United Nations:

R. PIRIZ-BALLON




Map No. 3887 UNITED NATIONS
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